

Urban District of Burnham-on-Sea



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1958



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U R B A N D I S T R I C T O F B U R N H A M - O N - S E A

BUILDING AND SANITARY COMMITTEE 1958

Chairman:

MR. P.W. GRIFFIN

MR. P. GILES

MRS. C. KEEDWELL

MR. A.H. BRISTOW

MR. M.W. TRENCHARD-COX

MR. G.W. GULLIFORD

MRS. W.G. TROWBRIDGE

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1958

Medical Officer of Health:

R.H. WATSON, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Building and Chief Public Health Inspector:

W.B. GRAHAM, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Housing Officer and Assistant Public Health Inspector:

H.F. ROBINSON, M.A.P.H.I.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1958

Tel: Bridgwater 2689

Health Department,
Albert Street,
BRIDGWATER.

August, 1959.

To:-

The Chairman and Members of the
Burnham-on-Sea Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the Urban District, and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1958. The report is set out in the manner of previous years, so that comparison with former reports can easily be made.

As far as can be judged from a study of the vital statistics, the general health of the district was satisfactory during the year. The figures show little variation from those of the previous year, but the standardised birth rate has been lower than that for the country as a whole.

Probably the most important development in preventive medicine in the year under review has been the expansion of the scheme for immunisation against poliomyelitis. Limitation in the supply of vaccine necessitated the restriction of immunisation to those exposed to the greatest risk, and at first, apart from certain adults, immunisation was available only for children between the ages of six months and fifteen years. The upper age limit was later raised to include people up to the age of twenty five years, but as is now well known, the initial response from these people was most disappointing, and it was not until the death of a well known footballer that the demands for immunisation became almost overwhelming.

Once again I wish to thank the Members of the Council, and Clerk, and Officials of other departments, and the Staff of the Public Health Department, for their willing assistance and co-operation.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

R.H. WATSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (including foreshore)	2,245 acres
Population (census 1951)	9,136
Population (Registrar General's estimate) 1958	9,710
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1958	3,030
Rateable value on 31st December, 1958	£124,971
Sum represented by 1d rate on 31st December, 1958	£ 515

Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1958

Live Births

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	63	64	127
Illegitimate	2	1	3
	<u>65</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>130</u>

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population 13.39

Still-Births 4

Still-Birth Rate per 1,000 live and still-births 29.82

Total Live and Still-Births 134

Infant Deaths (Deaths of infants under one year of age) Nil

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - total Nil

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - legitimate Nil

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - illegitimate Nil

Neo Natal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births Nil

Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births 2.31

Maternal Deaths (including abortion) Nil

Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still-births Nil

Deaths.

Total number of deaths 119

Death Rate per 1,000 population 12.55

Births.

After allowing for inward and outward transfers, the Registrar General's figures show that there were 130 births (65 boys and 65 girls) in the District during 1958, being five births less than in 1957. Of these births 3 were illegitimate. This is 2.3% of the total live births, as compared with 4.4% in 1957.

The Registrar General provides a comparability factor for the purpose of rendering the birth rate of the Urban District comparable with that of a district the population of which is of standard age and sex distribution. Accordingly when the birth rate is multiplied by this factor, the product represents the birth rate for comparison with other districts. The birth rate for Burnham-on-Sea Urban District adjusted in this manner is increased from 13.39 to 15.13 per 1,000 of the population. The birth rate for England and Wales was 16.4.

Birth rates for the District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
Burnham Urban District	18.06	13.50	14.14	13.89	13.39
Corrected Birth Rate	20.59	15.39	16.12	15.70	15.13
England and Wales	15.2	15.0	15.6	16.1	16.4

Deaths.

The number of deaths registered in the Urban District during 1958 was 97. Of these 10 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand 32 deaths of Urban District residents registered outside the District. The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the District was 119 (61 males and 58 females). This was 24 less than in the previous year, and gave a crude death rate of 12.55.

This crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the populations of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution. The Registrar General supplies an "Area Comparability Factor" and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can then be compared with the death rate of the country as a whole, or with the mortality of any other local area. The corrected death rate so obtained was 9.29 per 1,000 of the population and this was compared with 11.7 for England and Wales.

Death rates for the District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
Burnham Urban District	13.36	12.15	14.76	14.71	12.55
Corrected Death Rate	9.49	8.63	11.07	11.03	9.29
England and Wales	11.3	11.7	11.7	11.5	11.7

The following table shows the cause of death and sex distribution:-

Cause of Death	M.	F.	Total
All Causes	61	58	119
1. Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	1	-	1
2. Other forms of tuberculosis	-	-	-
3. Syphilitic disease	-	-	-
4. Diphtheria	-	-	-
5. Whooping cough	-	-	-
6. Meningococcal infections	-	-	-
7. Acute poliomyelitis	-	-	-
8. Measles	-	-	-
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	-	-	-
10. Malignant neoplasm of stomach	-	3	3
11. Malignant neoplasm of lung, bronchus	3	-	3
12. Malignant neoplasm of breast	-	4	4
13. Malignant neoplasm of uterus	-	1	1
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	5	6	11
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	1	-	1
16. Diabetes	1	-	1
17. Vascular lesions of the nervous system	4	16	20
18. Coronary disease and angina	11	4	15
19. Hypertension with heart disease	1	1	2
20. Other heart disease	7	7	14
21. Other circulatory disease	3	9	12
22. Influenza	1	-	1
23. Pneumonia	3	2	5
24. Bronchitis	2	-	2
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	1	-	1
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	-	1
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1	-	1
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	-	-	-
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	2	-	2
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-	-
31. Congenital malformations	1	-	1
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	5	2	7
33. Motor vehicle accidents	2	3	5
34. All other accidents	3	-	3
35. Suicide	2	-	2
36. Homicide and operations of war	-	-	-

Deaths. Age Groups 1958.

<u>Age</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 1 year	-	-	-
1 - 2 years	-	-	-
3 - 4 "	-	-	-
5 - 9 "	1	-	1
10 - 14 "	-	-	-
15 - 19 "	-	-	-
20 - 24 "	2	-	2
25 - 34 "	1	-	1
35 - 44 "	1	2	3
45 - 54 "	4	4	8
55 - 59 "	5	1	6
60 - 64 "	8	5	13
65 - 69 "	4	5	9
70 - 74 "	6	4	10
75 - 79 "	14	15	29
80 - 84 "	6	10	16
85 and over	9	12	21
	61	58	119

Cancer Mortality.

The number of deaths of Urban District residents from cancer was 22 (males 8, females 14). This was the same as in the previous year. Cancer deaths constitute 18.5% of the total deaths during the year.

The following table shows the localisation of the disease in the 22 cases:-

Localisation	Number of deaths			1957
	Male	Female	Total	
Stomach	-	3	3	2
Lungs	3	-	3	3
Breast	-	4	4	4
Uterus	-	1	1	-
Other and unspecified organs	5	6	11	13
Total	8	14	22	22

It is interesting that this year as in the previous years, all deaths from lung cancer occurred in males. The ages at which death occurred in the last three years combined is detailed in the following table:-

Year	Under 15	15/24	25/34	35/44	45/54	55/64	Over 65	Total
1956				1		2	1	4
1957					1		2	3
1958						1	2	3

Deaths from Heart Disease.

Of 119 deaths, heart disease caused roughly 1 in every 4 (males 19, females 12). It represented 26.1% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 3.2 per 1,000 of the population.

Population.

The estimated population of the Urban District as at June 1958 was 9,710, which shows a decrease of 10 over the previous year. It is interesting to note population changes, and the following table illustrates the trend during the past twelve years:-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population increase</u>	<u>Natural increase</u>	<u>Net increase or decrease due to immigration or emigration</u>
1947	235	50	185
1948	402	56	346
1949	- 1	6	- 7
1950	124	10	114
1951	64	-22	86
1952	70	22	48
1953	116	25	91
1954	54	45	9
1955	50	12	38
1956	60	- 6	66
1957	30	- 8	38
1958	- 10	11	- 21

Natural increase = excess of births over deaths.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS

AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the cases of notifiable diseases that occurred in the Urban District during 1958. The table is drawn up after making the necessary corrections in diagnosis by either the practitioners or the Medical Officers at the Isolation Hospitals.

Disease	Under 1 yr.	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65 and over	Age unknown	Total	Admitted to Hospital
Scarlet fever			5		3	7									15	
Whooping cough	4	4	3	2	2	8	2				1				26	
Pneumonia						1							4		5	
Measles	3	20	16	16	31	150	4	2					1	3	246	1
Dysentery			1				1								2	
Poliomyelitis		1	1	2		7				2					13	12
Erysipelas	1														1	
Food poisoning										1			1		2	1
Total	8	25	26	20	36	173	7	2		3	1		6	3	310	14

During the previous year 71 cases of notifiable infectious diseases were notified.

Diphtheria.

No cases of diphtheria were notified. During the year 103 children under the age of 5 years and 2 children between the ages of 5 - 15 years (giving a total of 105), were immunised against the disease.

Poliomyelitis. - (a) Cases

An event of importance which occurred during the year and which involved the department in a considerable amount of work was a sharp outbreak of poliomyelitis which commenced at the end of August and terminated at the end of October. A total of 13 cases were notified, of which 8 were paralytic and 5 were non-paralytic cases. The majority of patients were aged about 5 years, but two adults were affected and as so often happens they were the more severely paralysed. A feature of the outbreak was the fact that the infection was localised to a small area in or near a housing estate, and all patients either lived in or had direct contact with that area.

The outbreak followed on a period when immunisation against poliomyelitis was freely available to children up to the age of 15 years, and it was a regrettable fact that not one of the infected children had availed themselves of the opportunity of being immunised. Indeed one cannot help observing that had they done so, the outbreak probably would never have occurred.

(b) Immunisation

1,282 people completed the primary immunisation of two injections, by the end of the year, and in addition a large number had received their first injection. For those who have completed the primary course a third injection is given after an interval of approximately seven months.

Measles.

246 cases were notified, as compared with 49 in the previous year. This was the usual biennial epidemic and it presented no features of particular note. Modern therapy has considerably reduced the seriousness of the common complications of measles and chronic ill health as a sequela is now unusual.

Scarlet Fever.

The number of confirmed cases was 15.

Vaccination against Smallpox.

The number of children vaccinated or revaccinated during the year was 82, as compared with 87 in the previous year.

Children Vaccinated

Under 1 year		1 to 4 years		5 to 14 years		15 years and over	
P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R
65	-	7	-	8	2	7	21

P = Primary vaccination.

R = Re-vaccination.

Vaccination is now voluntary, but the value of individual vaccination is, in my opinion, undiminished and I would advise all parents to have their children vaccinated, preferably at about the age of four months.

Tuberculosis.

Notifications of respiratory tuberculosis continue to be low, only four new cases being notified during the year, as compared with two in the previous year.

One case of non-respiratory tuberculosis was also notified.

New cases notified

<u>Age Periods</u>	<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-respiratory</u>
Under 5 years	1	-
5 - 14 "	-	-
15 - 24 "	2	1
25 - 44 "	-	-
45 - 64 "	1	-
65 and over	-	-
Total all ages	4	1

The search for positive cases amongst the contacts of known cases is well carried out and advantage is taken of the visits by the Mass Radiography Units for chest X-ray of members of the public.

B.C.G. Vaccination.

In order to raise the immunity to tuberculosis of school leavers, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to all children between the ages of 13 and 14 years, attending schools in the Mid-Somerset Divisional Area. 352 accepted the offer and received preliminary skin test, the "Heaf Test", to determine whether they had in fact already experienced some infection with tubercle bacillus. 286 of these gave a negative test and were vaccinated with the B.C.G. vaccine.

Food Poisoning.

Two cases of food poisoning were notified during the year. In one of these cases the source of the infection was traced to artificial cream in a sponge cake, and appropriate action was taken with the manufacturers. In the second case the cause was not ascertained.

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Housing.

The number of permanent dwellings in the Urban District	3,153
The number of permanent dwellings owned by the Local Authority	532
Number of houses declared unfit under Section 9 of Housing Act, 1957	3
Number of houses closed as a result of an undertaking given by the owner or following the issue of Closing Orders	9
Number of houses made fit during the year	17

	Houses/flats erected during the year		Houses in course of erection	
	For slum clearance	For other purposes	For slum clearance	For other purposes
Local Authority	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Private Enterprise	Nil	34	Nil	14
Total	Nil	34	Nil	14

In the period from 1st April 1945 to 31st December 1958 a total of 641 houses have been built. These were made up of 396 by the Local Authority and 245 by private enterprise.

During the year the Council pursued their proposal to provide accommodation for old people as a special project.

At the end of the year there were 210 applicants for Council Houses.

Water Supplies.

The mains water supply was satisfactory both as to quality and quantity. The water is treated by chlorination and bacteriological tests were carried out on the treated water on 15 occasions, all of which gave excellent results.

Sewage Disposal.

The Council considered the comprehensive report of the Surveyor on the general sewerage system of the District and agreed to the appointment of Consulting Engineers to investigate present conditions and to advise on the measures necessary to overcome difficulties experienced through the inadequacy of the existing sewers.

Camping Sites.

No licences have been issued for stationing of individual moveable dwellings. Four camping sites have been licensed, providing altogether for 380 moveable dwellings. Sanitary conditions are satisfactory and regular inspections are made by the Chief Public Health Inspector.

Milk Supplies.

(a) The number of Registered Distributors is	18
(b) The number of Registered Dairy Premises (other than Dairy Farms) is	3
(c) The number of Licensed Dealers of Designated milk is	21

Four supplementary licences have been issued to distributors whose dairies are outside the area.

Milk Sampling.

12 samples of Tuberculin Tested milk were taken. 9 samples were satisfactory and 3 unsatisfactory. Receipt of unsatisfactory samples is followed up as necessary.

5 samples of Pasteurised milk were taken, all of which were satisfactory.

Ice Cream.

The number of premises registered for manufacture and sale	2
For retail only	42

The number of samples taken was as follows:-

	<u>Hot Mix</u>	<u>Cold Mix</u>
Grade 1	20	1
Grade 2	6	4
Grade 3	3	1
Grade 4	2	-

Samples which fall into Grades 3 and 4 are considered to be unsatisfactory and are followed up by visits to the premises concerned, and where necessary, advice is given.

Slaughterhouses.

Ample facilities for slaughtering are available at the abattoir at Weston-super-Mare, and consequently the only slaughterhouse in the District which is licensed is that of the Highbridge Bacon Company.

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during the year:-

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed					40,048	
Number inspected					40,048	
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned					50	
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned					1,156	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis and cysticerci					3.01%	
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned					9	
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned					4,056	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis					10.15%	
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned					-	
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration					-	
Generalised and totally condemned					-	
Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for						
(a) Tuberculosis					33,363	
(b) Cysticercosis					-	
(c) Other					16,145	
Total (in lbs.) condemned					49,508	

The system of post mortem inspection in operation is that all carcasses are thoroughly examined by well trained personnel employed by the Bacon Company. All carcasses suspected of having any abnormal condition are isolated and are examined by the Public Health Inspector. A constant check is kept on the working of this system and full detailed examination of carcasses is carried out from time to time by the Chief Public Health Inspector. During the year this spot check was carried out on 5,212 animals.

Premises where food is prepared.

No statutory action was taken regarding enforcement of the provision of the Food and Drugs Act, and co-operation from food traders has continued to be good and improvements have been made to premises and equipment.

The number registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act 1955, is 14. Frequent inspections are made to ensure satisfactory conditions.

Knackers Yard.

One knackers yard is registered in this District and is visited frequently.

Refuse Disposal.

Disposal of refuse is by direct tipping into disused clarpits. As water accumulates in these pits, unsatisfactory conditions arise from time to time, mainly with the onset of warm weather.

